shipbuilding, including the big output of the United States, had in fact greatly surpassed that rate. Further, the new arrangements made for securing better use of our shipping were beginning to tell, and this reorganisation of our transport caused our shipping to be more effective than the figures for our net balance of available tonnage might imply. Our monthly average of imports during the last half-year of 1917 was 2,968,000 tons a month. During the period July-October, 1918, with a considerably smaller volume of shipping, the average was 3,002,000 tons a month. The story of how this effective use of our tonnage was organised is told in my chapter on the Ministry of Shipping.

It was Britain's grandest struggle on the seas — in its magnitude — in its intensity — in the issues that depended upon it. There were thousands of ships engaged in it, from the great battleships down to the smallest patrol boats — from the stately liners to the dogged tramps and the plucky little trawlers. Even the pleasure boats joined in. The battle was fought in every ocean, and on every trade route. Never were the skill, the daring and the endurance of British sailors put to so stern a test ; never was the superiority of their seamanship so triumphantly established. The deadly net that sought to envelop the Allied arms and leave them at the mercy of the Prussian sword was torn to shreds by the mariners of Britain.

The greatest Allied triumph of 1917 was the gradual beating off of the submarine attack. This was the *Conquest of* rea^ decision of the War, for the sea front *the submarine* ; turned out to be the decisive flank in the *our crucial* gigantic battlefield. Here victory rested *triumph*

The moment the War became a struggle, not to beat